

## [George Richmond]

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1 Conn. [1938-9?] Richmond

George Richmond:

"Well, your old friend Botsford passed on, didn't he? I knew when they took him down there, they'd never bring him out, only feet first. He was stubborn, Art was. Wouldn't do anything they told him. Wouldn't even stay in bed. They caught him walkin' around the corridor one night. You know I live few houses down from him, and my landlady, Mrs. Stone, she's the one that finally got him to go to the hospital, in a way. If he'd gone down there first off he would've been alive today, but he was stubborn, Art was. She went over one mornin' to take him some cake and she found him layin' on the couch. Said he'd had a dizzy spell or somethin' and there was a lump on his head big's an egg where he'd fallen down. Well she wanted to get a doctor for him right away, but he said no, he'd be all right in a little while. But he was real sick the next day, and Barney Lynch the blacksmith come up to see him — they were great friends—and Mrs. Stone, she persuaded Barney to talk Art into havin' the doctor, and when the doctor came he says Art you're a sick man and this ain't no place for you. He had pneumony by then, you see. So they called the ambulance and took him to the hospital. But I knew when they took him down there they'd bring him out feet first. He was gettin' on in years—seventy eight, Art was—and he wa's't the same man since he stopped workin'. Of course he looked strong and vigorous, but you can't always tell by that. You can't tell what's inside a man. You take me, I's only seventy three and I look puny alongside of him don't I? But I bet I's good for ten years or more yet, if I don't get hit by one of these damn cars that go skyhootin' through here. I can't see so very good. Everything is blurred. I can see the damn things comin' when I's crossin' the road, but I can't tell how close they are. One of 'em'll prob'ly get me yet, one of these days. Stay home? Well I guess not, I'd rather 2 take my chances and get hit by a car if I have to,

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than sit home on my rear end all day long, not knowin' what's goin' on or anything. Well I be damned if here ain't John Scheebel, I didn't know he was home from Floridy. "Hi there, John, how they hittin'?"

Mr. Scheebel: "Hello, George, what's new in the old burg?"

Mr. Richmond: "Oh, I don't know. You see in the papers about Art Botsford, I suppose?"

Mr. Scheebel: "Yes, I was readin' about it this mornin'. Too bad, I just got in last night, and that's the first piece of news I see. Poor old Art."

Mr. Richmond: "Well, Art was a pretty stubborn man. If he'd had the doctor right away when he got sick. You drive up, did you John, or take the train?"

Mr. Scheebel: "I drove. Got a new car. I picked it up for a song down there and say, she rides dandy. Best car I ever drove."

Mr. Richmond: "How's business down there?"

Mr. Scheebel: "Well, it ain't bad right now. There's a kind of a little buildin' boom goin' on right now. Of course the government is in back of most of it. When you speak about business down there, you mean buildin'. That's about all there is down there. There's more buildin' down there right now than there has been since the boom. I sold out. I sold everything but one lot. Sold the house and all. I had a chance to make a little something so I took it. You don't know how long this is gonna last you know. Bottom will probably fall right out of it. So I figured I'd make it while I had a chance. I don't know's I'll go back next year, but if I do I've still got 3 the lot. Take a trailer and live in that all winter. Good many people are doin' that. You see right now, everybody's buyin' these houses, but in two or three years a lot of 'em are goin' to let go of 'em, and you'll be able to get property dirt cheap again."

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Mr. Richmond: "I suppose so. How's the weather been down there?"

Mr. Scheebel: "Gettin' pretty hot, the last month or two. And dry. We ain't had much rain. I figured I'd get up here into some cool weather, but damned if it ain't been hot ever since I started. The winter wasn't bad, though. One of the best winters I've seen down there in a good many years."

Mr. Richmond: "That so? Say, John, you got any dope in the back of your head on the knifemakin' business? This fella here's lookin' for information on the knife trade."

Mr. Scheebel: "Why, I don't know anything much about it. I spent my time in the clock shop. There oughta be a few knifemakers left around here."

Mr. Richmond: "There ain't many. You'd be surprised how that trade has died out."

Mr. Scheebel: "A lot of them are dyin' out. You know what the trouble is? Too damn many cars. That's where all the money's goin', what there is of it. Every son of a bee and his brother 's got a car. And every extra dime they get is goin' for gas and upkeep. Who the hell's goin' to buy a clock, today, for instance? If a man gets a spare dollar, he won't use it to buy a clock. Get five gallons of gas and take the family out for a ride, that's what he'll do. You see the clock business goin' to hell don't you, same's the knife trade did? We're watchin' it go right now, that's what we're doin'. Well, I got to be gettin' along up town. The wife sent me out after groceries.

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See you fallas later.

Mr. Richmond: "There's a fella that was smart. He saved his money in good times and invested it and got out of the clock shop just in time. Now he goes down to Floridy every winter. Been doin' it for the last twelve years or so. And he'll prob'ly be doin' it for twelve years to come. John's only about sixty two or three. That's the way to live, ain't it? Follow

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the sun. These winters we have are killers. Man lives through 'em year after year without gettin' pneumony, he's damn lucky. Damn lucky."